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OGC 63-2143

18 July 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of the House Committee on Science
and Astronautics

25X1A 1. On this date, at the Committee's request, the Agency briefed the House Committee on Science and Astronautics on the development and status of Soviet space capabilities. The briefing was given by Dr. Albert Wheelon. With three exceptions, the entire membership of 31 members was present. Those not attending were Representatives Martin, Morris and Staebler. Present from the Agency in addition to Dr. Wheelon were

Mr. Lawrence R. Houston and [REDACTED] Messrs. Ducander and Hines, of the Committee staff, were also present. No transcript was taken.

2. In view of the fact that there are nine new members of the Committee, Dr. Wheelon gave a complete briefing including a discussion of all Soviet space shots. The members appeared interested and were most attentive. Dr. Wheelon invited the members to interrupt him with questions at any time during the briefing and a number of the members availed themselves of this invitation. However, with few exceptions the questions were easily handled and required no follow up. These questions included whether there had been exchanges of meteorological data between ourselves and the Soviets, whether there had been losses of Soviet astronauts, and the extent of the Soviet research and development in this field.

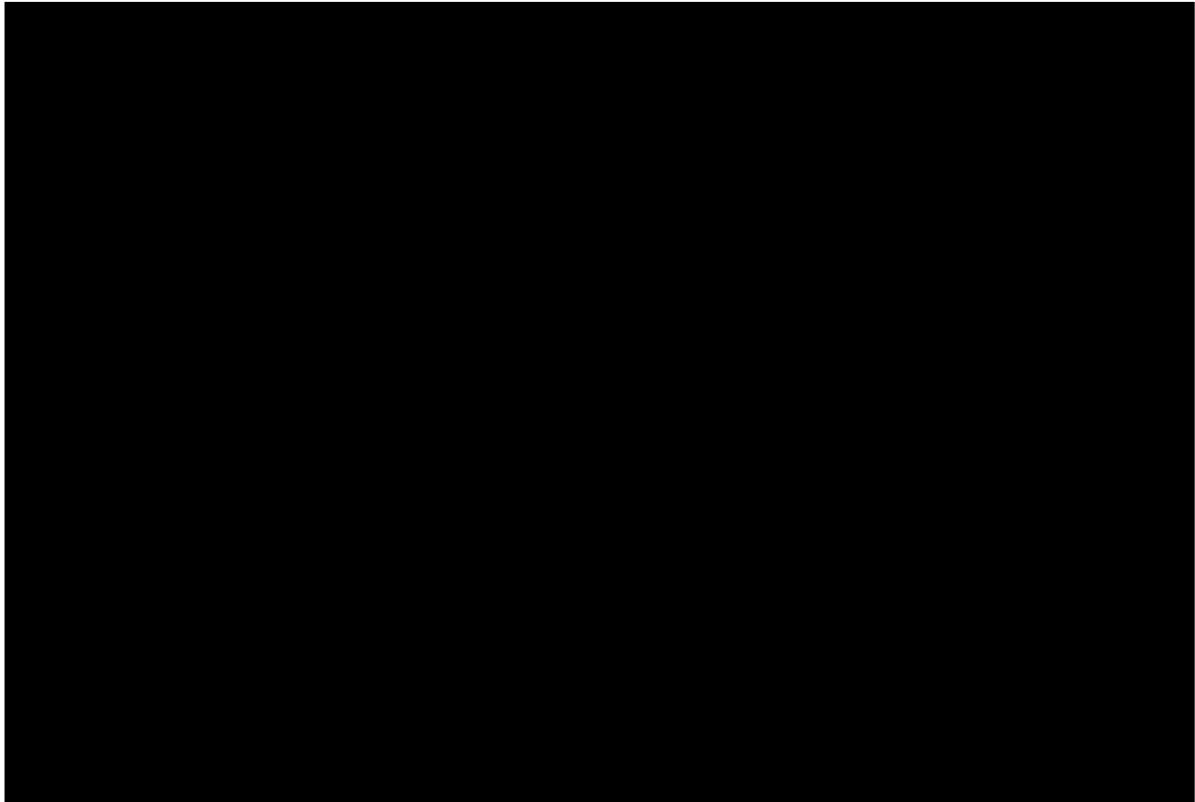
3. Of particular interest was the fact that one of the freshmen congressmen, Representative Edward J. Gurney, followed the briefing closely and asked a number of very pertinent questions. He expressed interest in the Soviet space craft. Dr. Wheelon told him the Soviets had released pictures of the vehicle and we would be pleased to make them available to the Committee. [REDACTED]

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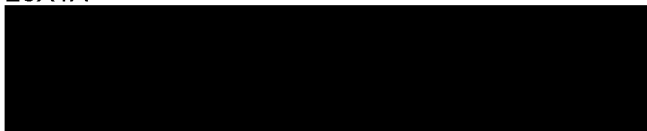
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5. Representative John W. Wydler inquired why the chart of Soviet space shots could not be publicly exhibited in comparison with a similar chart on U.S. shots. Mr. Houston explained that while much of the information that went into the chart was unclassified, it was so intermixed with information from highly sensitive sources that public exhibit would lose us those important sources.

6. It was the impression of Mr. Houston and myself that Dr. Wheelon was an excellent witness in his first experience with a congressional briefing. We were advised later by the Committee staff that it was the general consensus of the members of the Committee that Dr. Wheelon's presentation was the best intelligence briefing the Committee had ever had.

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